

DIERICHHS et al. — 10/784,895  
Attorney Docket: 081468-0305313

#### REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are pending. By this Amendment, the specification, including the abstract, is amended and claims 12 and 21 are amended. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

The abstract was object to. The abstract has been amended in accordance with the suggestion of the Office Action. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the abstract are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Pierrat (U.S. Patent 6,040,892). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As clearly shown in Figure 2 of Pierrat, the aperture blades 216, 218, 220, and 222 are clearly positioned in a plane prior to the projection optics 226 and the wafer 210. Therefore, the aperture blades are not in a first plane that is intermediate a second conjugate to a plane of the wafer 210 and a third plane conjugate to the a pupil plane of the project optics 226. Pierrat does not anticipate claims 1 and 12.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection over Pierrat are respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 2-9 and 13-20 define patentable subject matter and that claims 10, 11, 21 and 22 are allowed. However, in view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all the claims are allowable and that the entire application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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